

Soldiers march home to G.I. Bill benefits

By Lynn Mongar

As Johnny came marching home from each of this nation's wars, veterans' benefits have awaited him. Colonial legislatures and the British Parliament established the practice with the first settlements. Traditionally, Americans have granted postwar benefits and medical care for disabled servicemen.

However, benefits for the able-bodied servicemen are a recent development.

The reemployment provision of the Selective Service Act of 1940 to help veterans during the period immediately after their release from active duty, foreshadowed the central theme of the Government Issue or G.I. Bill.

During World War I, Congress and President Woodrow Wilson had failed to enact legislation to assist able-bodied veterans returning to civilian life.

Servicemen's organizations, and veterans themselves lobbied and marched in Washington D.C. for a veterans' benefits bill.

FOUR PRESIDENTS vetoed the veterans bonus bill before it was signed into law. On May 18, 1944, following several days of debate Congress approved its version of the G.I. Bill without a dissenting vote.

Among World War II veterans eligible for benefits, more than 2,232,000 veterans attended colleges at a cost of about \$5.5 billion.

The nation's institutions of higher learning found the flood of veterans attending school difficult to accommodate. Prefabricated housing units and tents were used at

several universities to accommodate returning servicemen attending school on the G.I. Bill.

The benefits under the G.I. Bill have increased since World War II, according to a Veteran Service officer of the Veterans Administration.

"The Vietnam era vets have monetarily greater benefits," Bert Plannette said.

PLANNETTE SAID he thought Congress was more aware of what the Vietnam veteran needed.

V.A. Chief of Fields Section, Paul Madsen, said, "The Vietnam vets were more vocal about their needs."

The G.I. Bill for the veteran today provides more money for loans and financial assistance for tutoring.

A special V.A. campaign is underway to encourage Vietnam veterans to use their education benefits before their entitlement ends, according to a V.A. spokesman.

Veterans have 10 years after their discharge but not later than Dec. 31, 1989, to use the G.I. Bill.

In 1978, the agency said Operation Boost concentrated on 11 states with 50 percent of the veterans taking advantage of the G.I. Bill.

In Nebraska, 62 percent of the Vietnam veterans have taken advantage of benefits. Today at the University of Nebraska 1,200 students are receiving financial aid from the G.I. Bill.

THE PROGRAM today is "not the program it was before," Plannette said. The current program, for veterans and servicepersons entering active duty on or after Jan. 1, 1977, is on a matching dollar basis.

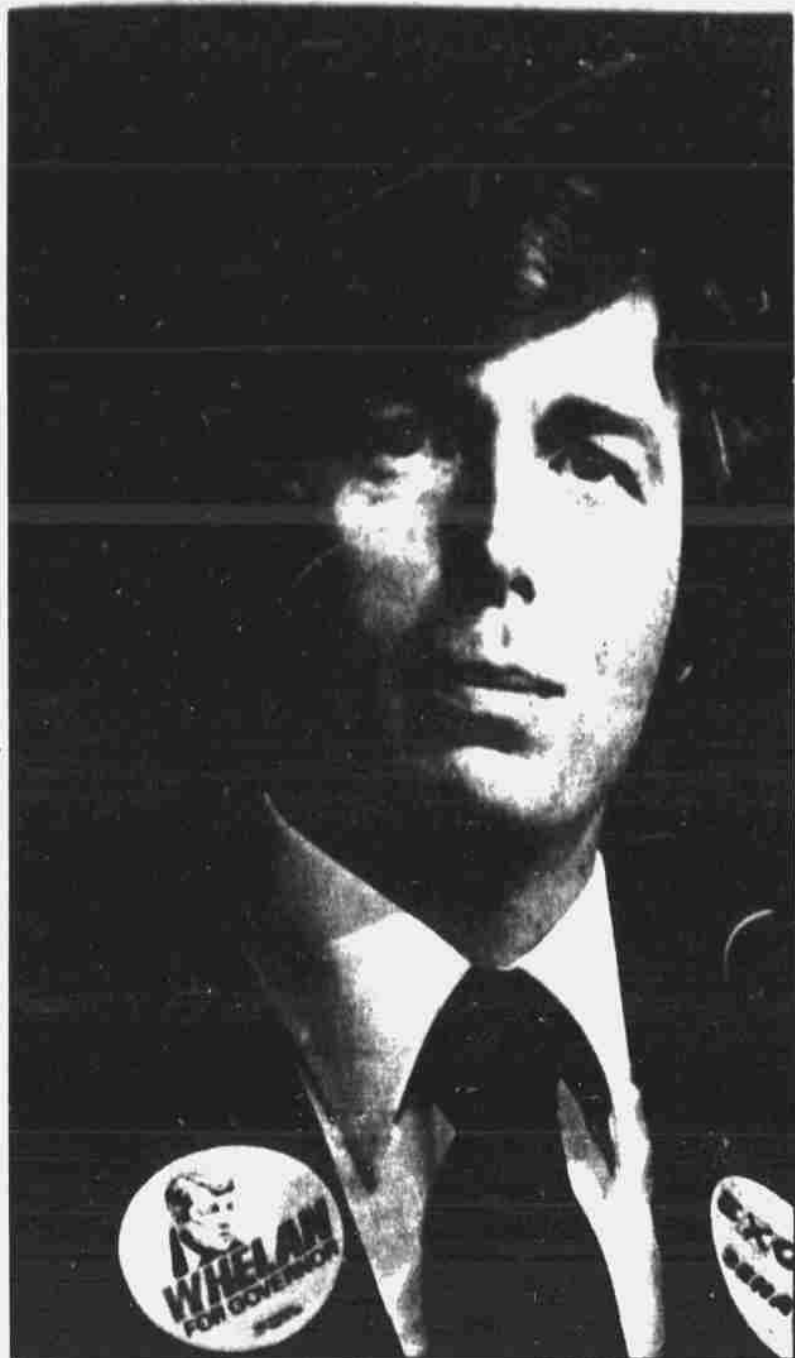
The Veterans Administration will match the contribution of the veteran at the rate of \$2 for every \$1 paid by the veteran. The Department of Defense may also make contributions to the fund.

Sgt. John Henry of the Marine Recruiting Office said the new program has not affected recruitment.

"It's not that big of a factor," he said. "I've been in the Marines for 12 years and I haven't seen that much of a difference," he said.

Sgt. Jim Taylor of the Army Recruiting Office agreed with Henry.

"It really hasn't affected our recruiting at all," he said. "The new program is even part of my sales pitch."



Rep. John Cavanaugh

Daily Nebraskan photo

'Universal service' not the traditional draft

By Betsie Ammons

A proposal to reinstate the draft, under the catch-all title "universal service" will be introduced to Congress within the next two weeks, according to Nebraska Rep. John Cavanaugh.

But it will not be the traditional draft. The bill would place males and females ages 18 to 26 in various civil service jobs as well as in the military.

"It will provide a system for an economic manner in which we meet priorities," Cavanaugh said.

According to the Jan. 19 issue of the *Daily Nebraskan*, Cavanaugh has said that the volunteer service system presently used is becoming inadequate, and the armed services are primarily made up of lower income individuals and minority groups.

THESE GROUPS, he said in the *Daily Nebraskan*, have the "least favorable opportunities" in private enterprise.

In a March 15 article in the *Omaha World Herald*, Cavanaugh was quoted as saying "The truth is we have been using the volunteer force as a social safety valve to relieve our society from the consequences of our failure to provide true quality of economic and employment opportunity for the nation's minorities."

The *World Herald* also reported that Cavanaugh said more than 42,000 blacks were taken into the army last year under the all volunteer system.

Under Cavanaugh's proposal, all males and females would be required to register with the United States Department of Defense before their 18th birthdays, and have the option to specify the six month period when they are eligible for selection by the government.

In addition, according to the *Daily Nebraskan*, a person would have the alternative to volunteer for the armed forces, forestry or other governmental agencies, exempting them from the draft.

THOSE CHOSEN FOR duty during the six months they have designated would be inducted for two years of service. As with the previous draft, if the six months passed without notification, the individual is not under any obligation to the government.

At a press conference last Saturday in Omaha, Cavanaugh was confident about the proposal.

"I think there is a growing appreciation and understanding of this problem," he said.

He also said extra compensation may be added for those who opt for the military service, to ensure that some choose it over civilian jobs.

The House Armed Services Committee questioned Cavanaugh about the bill on March 14. According to the *World Herald* article, it met with mixed reactions from committee members.

From a recruiter's standpoint, Gunnery Sgt. J.D. Henry of the U.S. Marine Corps said he agrees with the proposal 100 percent.

Although the Marines did not draft in the past, Henry said the draft provides them with a "ready available list of people qualified" for armed services.

HENRY EXPLAINED THAT the majority of U.S. Department of Defense draftees are given to the U.S. Army, with the spillover going to the Air Force, Navy and Marines.

Henry said the Marines have not had trouble recruiting

in Lincoln, but that nationwide the volunteer program has some problems.

Henry, concurring with Cavanaugh, said he thinks the majority of volunteers are what he called "lower citizens, people who cannot make it in any other way."

These volunteers present problems to the recruiters, he said, as a great deal of reference checking must be done before they are admitted.

Henry said he thinks the new draft would save the country money. The amount the U.S. spends on volunteer services would be more effectively used, he added.

Under the Equal Rights Amendment, women should be included in the draft, said Henry, a marine for 12 years.

"IF THEY WANT equal rights, there shouldn't be any choice," he said. "Why in the hell should they be excluded?"

Staff Sgt. Jim Vanderslice, a U.S. Army Reserve recruiter, also favors the proposal.

Vanderslice said he thinks the draft would be more cost effective.

"The overhead of just getting one person into the service is in the neighborhood of \$5,000," he said. "This does not include training, it is just to get him to raise his right hand."

Vanderslice said recruiting costs include advertising on national television, and paying for physicals and recruiters' salaries. In some cases, he said, potential recruits must be flown to large cities for the physicals.

The draft would eliminate having to offer financial compensations to coerce people into the service, according to Vanderslice. He said draftees would have no choice in the matter and the bonuses would not be necessary.

VANDERSLICE AGREED WITH Henry that the draft would provide a better cross section of the population in the military.

"The doctors' and lawyers' sons would be included along with the rest," he said.

Vanderslice also said, however, that the draft would "enhance the national defense posture."

In threat of war, he said, the U.S. would not have enough time under the volunteer system to get adequate military personnel before war broke out.

But Vanderslice said he most strongly supports the draft for a purely emotional reason—a person's duty to his country.

"People take for granted the freedoms they enjoy," he said. "The only thing that stands between them and no freedom is the military."

"I am finally resolved that people do have patriotic duty, contrary to popular notion."

Vanderslice predicted that the final form of a reinstated draft would be a compromise between hard-line draft supporters and those who believe in volunteer service.

He said he thinks the draft will be implemented for the U.S. Army Reserves, which would cause the percentage of people who enlist full time to increase, because the draft lets them serve two years instead of the six the Reserves require.

Although the Army received the most draftees under the old system, Vanderslice said he has no trouble recruiting in Lincoln. Rather, he said, the problems have all been with the high cost of recruiting.

Nuclear discussions stem from explosion of first atom bomb

By Shelley Smith

The first atomic bomb exploded July 16, 1945, near Alamogordo, N.M. Within a few weeks, American planes helped bring World War II to an end by dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The bombs killed over 100,000 people.

Since that first explosion in 1945 and the total destruction of two Japanese cities, the merits of atomic energy have been a major concern for every nation.

According to the *World Book Encyclopedia*, the history of the atomic bomb began in the late 1890's when scientist Albert Einstein's theory of relativity provided a basis for understanding nuclear energy.

Soon, many physicists recognized the military possibilities of atomic energy and felt that the United States government would be interested in further research. Early in 1940, the scientists received the first federal funds for research.

THE RESULTS OF the research were positive and in 1942 The Manhattan Engineer District of the Corps of Engineers (the Manhattan Project) was established to pursue the production of an atom bomb.

After the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Russians tested their first atomic bomb in 1949. Soon, every major country in the world was testing nuclear energy.

Realizing the dangers nuclear weapons represented to the world, the United Nations in 1963 proposed a treaty banning nuclear testing on the ground, in space, and under water. Within two years, more than 130 nations had signed the treaty. And in 1968, the UN approved a treaty to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

However, research concerning nuclear weaponry continued.

Criticisms of nuclear energy emerged almost immediately after the long-range effects of the bombs dropped on Japan were known. The land was burned barren and filled with radioactive substances—thousands of people were stricken with the scars of severe radiation.

Continued on Page 8